CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A sleeve for use with a modular orthopaedic implant having a first component with a male junction element and a second component with a female junction element for receiving the male junction element to couple the components together, the sleeve comprising:

a hollow sleeve body having an outer portion able to be received in the female junction element and an inner portion able to receive the male junction element, the sleeve body being positionable between the male and female junction elements; and

means for temporarily maintaining the first and second components in an assembled condition.

2. The sleeve of claim 1 wherein the means for maintaining comprises friction engagement between the sleeve and each of the first and second components.

3. The sleeve of claim 1 wherein the sleeve is stretchable to tightly conform to the shape of the male junction element.

4. The sleeve of claim 1 wherein the sleeve is initially rolled into a ring shape and is able to be unrolled over the male junction element.

5. A sleeve for use with a modular hip stem having a stem component and a proximal body component, the stem component having a tapered male extension and the proximal body having a correspondingly tapered bore for receiving the extension, the sleeve comprising:

a hollow sleeve body having an outer portion able to be received in the tapered bore and an inner portion able to receive the tapered extension, the sleeve body

being positionable between the male and female junction elements, the sleeve body engaging the implant components to temporarily maintain them in an assembled condition.

6. The sleeve of claim 5 wherein the sleeve body includes an outer taper and an inner taper.

7. The sleeve of claim 5 wherein the sleeve body is resilient and the inner dimension is initially smaller than the tapered extension but is stretchable to fit tightly over the tapered extension.

8. A combination of a sleeve and a modular orthopaedic implant, the combination comprising:

a modular orthopaedic implant having a first component with a male junction element and a second component with a female junction element for receiving the male junction element to couple the components together; and

a hollow sleeve having an outer portion able to be received in the female junction element and an inner portion able to receive the male junction element, the sleeve being positionable between the male and female junction elements; and

means for temporarily maintaining the first and second components in an assembled condition.

9. The sleeve of claim 8 wherein the first and second components are provisional implant components.

10. The sleeve of claim 8 wherein the first and second components are actual implantable components.

11. The sleeve of claim 8 wherein one of the first and second components is a provisional implant component and the other of the first and second components is an actual implant component.

12. The sleeve of claim 8 wherein one of the male and female junction elements comprises metal and the other of the male and female junction elements comprises a polymer.

13. The sleeve of claim 8 wherein the male and female junction elements both comprise metal.

14. The combination of claim 8 wherein the first component comprises a stem of a femoral hip implant and the second component comprises a proximal body of a femoral hip implant.

15. The combination of claim 14 further comprising a modular head component engageable with the proximal body and an acetabular component engageable with the head component.

16. The combination of claim 8 wherein the first component comprises a neck extension of a femoral hip implant and the second component comprises a head of a femoral hip implant.

17. A method of temporarily joining modular orthopaedic implant components, the method comprising:

providing a modular orthopaedic implant having a first component with a male junction element and a second component with a female junction element for receiving the male junction element to couple the components together;

providing a sleeve having a hollow sleeve body with an outer portion able to be received in the female junction element and an inner portion able to receive the male junction element; and

positioning the sleeve between the first and second components with the sleeve received in the female junction element and the male junction element received in the sleeve to temporarily maintain the first and second components in an assembled condition.

18. The method of claim 17 further comprising:

stretching the sleeve over the male junction element.

19. The method of claim 17 further comprising:

providing the sleeve in an initial rolled-up configuration; and

unrolling the sleeve over the male junction element.

20. The method of claim 17 further comprising:

ascertaining the fit of the first and second components with a patient's anatomy by placing the first and second components in a surgical opening in the patients body with the sleeve interposed between them to hold them in an assembled condition;

separating the first and second components while leaving the sleeve engaged with one of the components;

engaging another component with the sleeve to create another assembly; and

ascertaining the fit of the new assembly with the patient's anatomy.